

Avon BAP Woodland Group Meeting  
 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007  
 10.30 am – 12.30 pm  
 Bower Ashton Training Centre



Chair: Jim Fry  
 Minutes: Matt Hamilton

Item		
1	<p><b>Introductions &amp; apologies</b></p> <p><b>Present:</b> Jim Fry (FOA), Matt Hamilton (ABP), Richard Ennion (BCC), Lorne Campbell (FE), Tim Corner (BRERC), Jacqui Symmons (The Deer Initiative SW), Emma Hook (AWT volunteer).</p> <p><b>Absent:</b> Rob Spence (FC), Lucy Rogers (AWT), Robin Marshall-Ball (BASC), Bill Morris (NT), Sally Pattison (BANES &amp; SGlos), Mark Minkley (BANES), Mathew Bufton (HMP Leyhill), Norman Healey (The Deer Initiative SW), Stuart Hales (AWT).</p>	
2	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MH reported that the BAP atlas is now available to download on the ABP website; <a href="http://www.avon-biodiversity.org.uk">www.avon-biodiversity.org.uk</a></li> <li>• RE reported that consultation for P&amp;GSS due in tomorrow. Also BCC BARS data due in, MH to get volunteers to chase up.</li> <li>• MH to start veteran tree project, aided by new volunteers.</li> </ul>	<p>MH</p> <p>MH</p>
3	<p><b>BCC SNCI Condition Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RE updated the group on BCCs condition assessment of Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs). As an adaptation of NE SSSI's condition assessment, it breaks down habitat condition into four components; favourable, unfavourable, partly destroyed, destroyed. BCC have 86 SNCIs, some of which will already be SSSIs and SACs. Aims to determine the condition of SNCIs and to improve them to favourable status.</li> </ul> <p>Methodology was kept simple, less complex than NEs, reflecting hierarchical nature of protected sites. Three main parts to method;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Detailed habitat mapping with scale, as a benchmark.</li> <li>2. Judgement of whether certain areas need to be included due to, for example, small size.</li> <li>3. Recording the distribution of floral species across sites, measured by a points score related to notability and frequency. Score of 1 is best. Attributes, relating to management level required, recorded as positive, negative or neutral.</li> </ol> <p>Currently BCC-owned SNCIs only. Target in P&amp;GSS is that all SNCIs should be in favourable condition by 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MH questioned whether data will be going to BRERC. RE stated there are a few complications with data fitting into BRERCs database but aim is to get it to BRERC soon.</li> <li>• JF questioned whether SNCI assessment accounts for future climate change. RE stated that decision has to be made regarding whether effort</li> </ul>	

	<p>would be put into maintaining a site which is declining due to climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JS commented that you cannot plan for climate change but SNCI gives management an advantage as gives detailed baseline data.</li> </ul>	
4	<p><b>Woodland Mapping and follow up work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JF distributed map of BAP priority woodland habitats, ASNW and PAW including WGS, EWGS and FC holdings.</li> <li>-Problems include; some of WGS is 5-6 years old and probably out of date, must approach Rob for update.</li> <li>-Maps do not include Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust or National Trust land.</li> <li>-The aim is to target landowners who are not already in a management scheme to see how/if the woodland is managed and get it into WEWS if appropriate.</li> <li>• TC highlighted that 80% of all BAP habitats is in SSSI of Agri-environment, so thus we need to target the 20% that isn't.</li> <li>• JF suggested Rural Renaissance scheme, which aims to help farmer diversify. Woodland management could be bought up when farmers are approached as part of this scheme.</li> <li>• JF highlighted the issue that landowners often view their woodland as useless land, suggesting that approaching landowners about their woodland whilst approaching them about a range of other things (as would be the case with the RRS) may be more successful than an approach solely about woodland.</li> <li>• JS suggested meeting with Confor to find landowners. MH to contact head office in six months after their re-organisation is complete.</li> <li>• JF to update map and liase with MH over relevant people to invite to next meeting. MH to produce scoping report for project in conjunction with JF.</li> </ul>	<p>MH</p> <p>JF/ MH</p>
5	<p><b>Dormice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sally Pattison sent the following dormouse update:.</li> </ul> <p><i>“Only one record of a brand new dormouse population so far this year - Compton Woods, in Compton Martin, Bath &amp; North East Somerset. This is an ancient woodland site and also a massive newly planted wood with approx. 350,000 new trees.</i></p> <p><i>The dormouse nest box schemes in Midger woods and Lower Woods have continued happily this year with low but stable numbers of dormice and some young. A new nest box scheme is being set up over the winter in Duncombe Bottom woods near Marshfield. This is a site I discovered last year and the monitoring is being taken on by Wiltshire Mammal Society - helpers welcome. Englishcombe woods will also hopefully recieve a few nest boxes over the winter.</i></p> <p><i>General thoughts are that our woods (in South Glos and B&amp;NES) do not have as many dormice as was expected. We can no longer say that they are under-recorded, I think they are just very, very rare. This isn't the picture for South Wales or Devon where dormice seem to turn up anywhere that has good habitat.”</i></p>	<p>MH</p>

6	<p><b>Woodland group partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MH reported that the Woodland Trust Office is shut until December</li> <li>• It was reported that Confor is being reorganised MH will contact in six months time.</li> <li>• MH reported that Fountains have joined focus group but must follow up which section of fountains it is. Contact John Osbourne at Fountains, estates team.</li> </ul>	<p><b>MH</b></p> <p><b>MH</b></p>
7	<p><b>Updates around the table</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ reported that the BAP atlas has been finalised and produced.</li> <li>○ BRERC are doing 3 or 4 hedgerow projects in South Glos and BANES</li> <li>○ BRERC have produced priority habitat evidence sheets to roll out nationwide.</li> <li>○ As part of Nature Maps development a visioning workshop is being held on October 17<sup>th</sup>, focussing on Lansdown as an example SNA.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• MH- reported on the forthcoming BAP newsletter, due to be produced in December. Request for articles from partners about their actions for the BAP. Newsletter will be circulated to public libraries and to key elective members.</li> <li>• RE reported that there will be new advert for NCO at BCC next week</li> <li>• JS- Norman Healey is currently busy with disease surveillance work, see website for more information; <a href="http://www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk">www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk</a></li> <li>• LC- continuing with sycamore and laurel maintenance at Leigh woods. Starting to look at hedgerow trees.</li> <li>• JF- been working on woodland maps.</li> </ul>	
8	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RE reported on the impact of change to habitat regulations and confusion on who to get advice from.</li> </ul>	
10	<p><b>Next meeting date</b></p> <p>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April from 10:30 – 12.30 at the Estate Office, Ashton Court.</p>	